

# The Lantern



Printed monthly for members and friends of the Sumter Junior Welfare League, Inc.

Sumter, South Carolina

Volume 81 - Number 8

May 2019



Left to Right, Back Row: **Karen Timmons, Gretchen Meyers, Nancy Branham, Darla Dean, Jennifer McMahon**  
Front Row: **Ann Cannon, Kim Johnston, Cindy Ardis**

## **Congratulations to Our New Sustaining Members**

By Jenny Knopf

The following ladies have served the Sumter community through the Sumter Junior Welfare League in many capacities for the past ten years. We thank them for their service, hard work, and dedication.

**Cindy Ardis** has served in various placements throughout her ten years in the League. Her placements have included: Gift Committee at the Wishing Well, Wishing Well Business Manager, Sumter Little Theatre, Provisional Co-Chair and Provisional Chair. Additionally, she served as Assistant Treasurer and Treasurer twice! Cindy's favorite placement was the Provisional Chair. She enjoyed getting to know a fabulous group of young ladies. She says, "The SJWL is so lucky to have that class. I love each of them, even if they do make me feel old when they call me Miss Cindy!"

Cindy is planning to work longer hours with her free time. Additionally, she'd like to continue scrapbooking, card making, traveling, reading and keeping up with the Alabama Crimson Tide.

As a word of advice for the Provisionals, Cindy suggests not to be afraid of accepting a position in the SJWL because you don't think you would be good at it. She says, "If I had done that, I would not have had a blessed year as Provisional Chair."

Cindy's most memorable moment in the League is when she received her invitation. Her funniest moment was when she was training Valerie James in the Wishing Well and she realized a customer was stealing candy bars, lots of candy bars!

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SJWL General Membership Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2019

Submitted by: Amy Jones

Call to order: **Valerie James** called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. Valerie welcomed us and reminded us to sign in and silence our phones. She mentioned to grab our update cards at the back table to update our information, and then partake in refreshments. Valerie thanked hospitality for refreshments and Day for providing the update cards.

Devotion: **Christine Kohl** did our devotion and talked about life after Easter. She referenced John 20:19-31. In this verse God is telling his disciples to get ready to be sent out into the world. The disciples went back to their familiar routine of everyday living soon after he said this. He had to remind them on the boat, to get out of it and feed his people. He wants us to be His church. He reminds us that the story is not finished. He comes to us and says, "Follow me." Sometimes we tend to put Easter back on the shelf. We need to think about what is next- the present tense. We need to follow Jesus now. She ended with some questions for us to think about: What other victories is God working on? Where does God show up? She challenges us to carry out this assignment to Easter and beyond and reminded us that God is not done with us yet.

President's Remarks: **Valerie James** thanked Lisa and Jenny for April's Lantern. The March minutes were received. Bronwyn motioned, and Vicki seconded. The minutes were approved as written. Valerie read the following correspondence: Elizabeth Clark, our recent guest speaker, is having a meet and greet to educate us on her skin care treatments and products on April 24th. The Chamber of Commerce Small Business Celebration is May 9th 6-8. Tickets are on sale online. Register at Sumterchamber.com Valerie asked Bronwyn to talk about the upcoming Mayor's Breakfast. She announced the following: The Mayor's Breakfast will be held on May 2, 2019 at Alice Drive Baptist Church. The key note speaker is Perry Tuttle, who spent 10 years in the NFL. He is now a Leadership Coach and is the Chaplain of the Charlotte Hornets. Tickets are \$10. The League received a letter from the Sounds of Grace from Kipper Ackerman thanking us for supporting their organization.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

Vice President: **Vicki Singleton** No Report

Secretary: **Amy Jones** \*Active members not attending the May Dinner need to regret in writing. \*Members should sign in the Guest Book at the May Dinner to record their attendance.

Treasurer: **Cindy Ardis** Balances in the account are as follows: Community Trust- \$17,220.10 Administrative- \$39,865.96 May Dinner checks are due by May 1st. You can put the checks on the table tonight or text Cindy to see if you've already paid. We voted as a League on the proposed budget. Vicki motioned, and Jennifer seconded. The budget was accepted.

Assistant Secretary: **Beth Poag** No Report

Assistant Treasurer: **Cheryl Landstrom** Membership fees were due on April 1. If you are past due, you will need to pay the \$70 plus a 10 dollar late fee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Admissions: **Jennifer McMahon** No Report.

Community Research: **Susan McGregor** No Report.

Computer: **Day Caughman** Membership updates are located in alphabetical order at the back tables. Please fill out your cards and return them to Day. She asked for us to come see her with any questions.

Wishing Well: **Julie Hobday** A few Wishing Well reminders: Please restock drinks and snacks during your shift or use the 15-minute overlap. Please pay paid workers on time. There will be an Inventory Day for the Wishing Well scheduled for Friday, May 31st. Julie will get with the committee with a time. She reminded us that if we ever felt uncomfortable in the Wishing Well, that we should use the silent alarm under the cash register. She thanked Caroline Motley for taking care of an enormous balloon order.

Hospitality: **Gretchen Meyers** reminded us of the upcoming May Dinner at the O'Donnell House on May 20th. There will be a 6:15 social hour and dinner will be at 7:00. The cost is \$35. Anyone that can't make it should respond in writing to Amy Jones.

Lantern: **Lisa Andrews** will be taking a photo of all members going Sustainer right after the meeting tonight.

Placement Council: **Katie Holloway** passed out placement summaries, and cards. She asked us to pick 5 placements we are available to do. Each chairman stood up and gave a rundown of what their placement was and the time commitment that it involved. She asked us to place our completed cards on the table under the cross. Amy Stallings asked about the number of active years, and whether or not we should include our provisional year. It was answered to just write down our number of active years. Valerie asked that everyone please put down 5 different choices when picking placements. Katie mentioned that Solomon's Home was not on the list so - Joni Walker spoke about the placement.

Provisional Chairman: **Stacy Montgomery** No Report

Sustainer Representative: **Kim Harrelson** No Report.

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**Nancy S. Branham** is also about to complete her final year as an active member of the Sumter Junior Welfare League. The placements Nancy has fulfilled during her years in SJWL were: Gift Committee, Wishing Well Co-Chair, Wishing Well Chair (2 years), Crosswell Home, Community Research, Placement Council Co-Chair, Placement Council Chair, Assistant Treasurer, Treasurer and 3 in 1. Her favorite placement was the Wishing Well Chair. She loved going to market and picking out merchandise to sell. Additionally, she enjoyed interacting with shoppers and spending a lot of time at the Wishing Well.

Nancy is looking forward to spending her free time with family and friends. Specifically, she plans to spend time with her daughters as they complete their middle and high school years. As far as hobbies are concerned, Nancy would love to pick reading up once again. This is a hobby she has pushed to the side over the years.

She would like to tell the Provisionals to spend time in SJWL serving in an area you are passionate about. She says, "Don't be afraid to find new opportunities and have them presented to the board. The League will continue to grow and change with your ideas and leadership."

Nancy will never forget the friendships she has made with women she didn't know upon first joining. A funny time for Nancy is when she didn't know, for several years, that we had a cash box in the back of the Wishing Well with change. Yes, even when she was the Chair! She made numerous trips after her shifts to the bank to get change.

**Ann Cannon** has volunteered in many areas throughout the past 10 years. Her placements have included: Giftshop Gifts, Gift Shop Co-Buyer, Gift Shop Buyer, Hospitality Co-Chair, Hospitality Chair and Hospitality Committee. Her favorite placement was the gift shop co-buyer and buyer. She loves shopping and enjoyed going to market and seeing the new products. Ann said, "It was great to look at new items and think about what the shoppers who shop with the Wishing Well might like. It was great going with other members and getting to know them better during our shopping experience."

In her free time, Ann plans to enjoy spending more time with family and friends and hopefully spend more time exercising, which has been hard to get in lately. She would like to do more afternoon walks outside and just enjoying nature. She would also like to pursue painting classes on a deeper level. She has found them to be a great stress relief for her.

Ann's advice to Provisionals is to "stick it out...ten years will go by fast. Sometimes you may feel like you want to throw in the towel but don't. It will be over before you know it. The experiences and friendships you form during your time in the league will provide lifelong memories and relationships. It is well worth 10 years."

She will never forget when she first went to market with the ladies from the gift shop. "I was so excited about the experience because I had always wanted to go to market, even before becoming a member of the league. Once we arrived, I suddenly became very overwhelmed. It was more than I had ever imagined. Shopping has always been a hobby of mine but shopping in an arena this big no longer made it a hobby. It was non-stop shopping all day. Of course, each time we went, it was easier. Although it was exhausting, the fellowship with the other members always made it a fun trip."

She can't really recall a specific funny moment, but can recall a lot of fun times. Decorating the gift shop at Christmas was always a fun event for her and brought lots of laughter, along with the Christmas Open House. Also, as she already mentioned, market trips were always fun and enjoyable.

**Darla Dean** is about to complete her final year as an active member of the Sumter Junior Welfare League. She has served in the Puppets placement. She enjoyed this placement because she could work with other SJWL members and get to know people she may not have otherwise.

Darla plans to read more and complete household organizing projects in her free time. She'd also like to pursue yoga.

Darla would like Provisionals to know that your service matters to someone, whether it is the child you spend time with at Crosswell, the nurse who buys a snack from you at the Wishing Well or the 3rd grader that sees the puppet show. She says, "In these days when were tempted to hurry up and get it done, take the time to really appreciate the opportunity you have been given to serve our community. Enjoy your years in the League; they are time well spent."

Darla will never forget when she nearly knocked the stage over during a puppet show. She was performing a turn and her knee hit against the center of stage, shaking it loudly and tilting it toward the audience. Another funny moment was when she first started doing puppets. They performed in the basement room of the museum and they used a boom box to play a CD of the show. One day it suddenly stopped during a performance and it took a few minutes to figure out what was wrong. She decided the kids needed to know something. Darla popped her puppet up and in her best "Ann" voice said, "We'll be right back." Her fellow puppeteers were rolling on the floor laughing behind the curtain.

**Kimberly Johnston** has volunteered her time through various placements the past ten years. Her placements have included: Crosswell Children's Home, Wishing Well Shifts, Wishing Well Gift Committee and Get Real About Violence. Her favorite placement was Get Real About Violence. She loved spending time with the children and getting to use her teacher talents during the summer.

In her free time, Kim would like to spend time with family and more time at the beach.

Kim would like Provisionals to enjoy every bit of the league. She mentions that there are many opportunities to make new friends, as well as opportunities to share your gifts and talents with others. She says, "There will be days that you are tired and it just seems impossible to get to the Wishing Well. When those days come, remember that you are making a difference in the lives of others."

Kim will never forget when they went to the Birnie Hope Center for a Get Real About Violence presentation. There, they found about 150 children waiting to hear from them! That particular group was larger than they had seen before. Thankfully, with the help of the placement team, they put their heads together and figured out what they needed to do to make it a success. It turned out to be a great presentation and they were proud of how awesome the children were to work with.

**Jennifer Mims McMahon** is also about to complete her final year as an active member of the Sumter Junior Welfare League. Her placements include: Crosswell Children's Home, Sumter County Museum Puppets, Wishing Well Shifts, Wishing Well Business Manager Chair, Wishing Well Business Manager Co-Chair, Admissions Chair and Admissions Co-Chair. Her favorite placement was the Wishing Well Business Manager. She chose this placement because it was flexible. She also enjoyed counting the money and having it ready for the next week. She liked being behind the scenes of an organization in order to help it move forward. She also mentioned that the Wishing Well is the way we give back to our community financially and this was very fulfilling for her.

In her free time, Jennifer plans to pursue activities that involve her children, family, church, job and community. She'd like to read, travel to the beach and spend more time with loved ones.

Jennifer had the following message for the Provisionals, "Ten years has truly flown by! What a great organization to be a part of to give back to our Sumter Community. Hang in there when the life schedule gets crazy!"

Jennifer will never forget when she went to her first Board meeting this year. She was unsure of what to expect and she did not know the Board members very well. She mentions that it has been a great experience getting to know the ladies on the Board and they have had a fun year while tackling the business at hand each month. She would like to encourage everyone to find a placement that would you give this opportunity.

Jennifer shared that every moment was funny the year she did Puppets. She says, "As you know, I'm tall. Oh, the positions you have to be in to keep your puppet at the right height while trying to move the puppet around and keep your own head below the curtain so you're not seen. All while trying to move the puppet's mouth when it's actually his turn to speak. Many laughs and memories!"

**Gretchen Meyers** has served in many capacities during her years in the SJWL. Her placements include: United Ministries (2 years), Crosswell Home, Wishing Well Co-Chair, Wishing Well Chair (2 years), Vice President, President, Hospitality and Hospitality Chair. Her favorite placement was the Wishing Well because she had the opportunity to go to market.

In her free time, Gretchen plans to run her kids around and take naps. She would love to pursue photography and learn how to shag before Owen's cotillion next year.

A word from Gretchen to the Provisionals, "Enjoy the opportunities that the League provides. You will meet so many people that you would otherwise never know. Push through and stay in, because life is busy either way."

Gretchen will never forget when Angie Sistare tried to go up the down elevator at market while dragging a full buggy. Another funny moment she recalls is when the Secretary announced that a birth note had been written and the name of the baby was the same as her dog.

**Karen Timmons** is also about to complete her final year as an active member of the Sumter Junior Welfare League. The placements Karen has fulfilled during her years in SJWL were: Crosswell Children's Home Chair, Crosswell Children's Home Co-Chair, Junior League Cookbook and Hospitality. Karen mentioned that she loved each placement. When she first started, her children were young so she wanted to be able to see the difference she was making with her volunteer time.

This led her to want to be at the Crosswell Home. She loved spending time with the children there. As she spent more time in the League, she realized that we are a team and every person in the League makes an impact with our time and gifts to the community.

In her free time, Karen hopes to spend more time exercising, traveling, reading and planning visits to USC to spend time with her children.

Karen will never forget when she was putting the cookbook together. It was overwhelming to gather, organize and type all of the recipes. She says it was a yearlong process. She was submitting after Spring Break, so she spent most of her week at the beach organizing and proofing the book. Luckily, it rained most of the week! She was so worried that she would miss a typo or that she would disappoint the League members. However, everyone was extremely positive when the book came out.

When asked what advice she would give to Provisionals, Karen says, “Ten years seems like such a long time, but it goes by so fast! Just savor all of the little moments when you know that you are making a difference. Maybe it was just being a smiling face for someone in the Wishing Well, a friendly ear for a grieving family member or just someone who gives an employee a laugh when they have had a LONG day – you touched a life. You gave them something that money couldn’t buy, exactly when they needed it. So, be in the moment when you are volunteering and give freely of yourself. You will always get back far more than you give.”

## *Congratulations to our Newest Active Members*



Left to Right, Back Row: Whitney Moss, Larsen Cline, Leah French, Philissa Edge, Whitney Brown, Kristi Knight  
Front Row: Jessica Fralick, Courtney Moore, Amy Barrineau, Mollie Oswald, Laurin Lee

### **A Note from the President**



“When troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.”

*-James 1:2*

Wow, what a year! This year started with challenges in a couple of our placements and with unpleasant encounters. However, as we always do, the Junior League membership continued our service through dedication, generosity, and community support not only for our placements, but also for Pigtails for Peyton, Salvation Army, and an emergency family crisis. Every aspect of this year has brought us to where we are today. We are stronger than we were in September. We have more hope and heart for our community. We have embraced service for others and have stayed true to our purpose.

Our gifts and service have provided great joy to the Sumter community. As individuals, we continue to grow through our service to others. The more we serve, the more we grow, as an organization and as individuals. We have accomplished so much...I can't wait to see what the future holds for this incredible organization. Thank you, for allowing me to serve as your President. It has been an honor to serve with so many gifted and charitable ladies. I pray we continue to provide great joy into our community.

Blessings,  
Valerie



*Meeting Minutes Continued:*

Old Business: Lindsey Bozeman won the Wishing Well coupon drawn by Kim Harrelson.

New Business: Above and Beyond- Angie Gilley was presented hers from last month. Katie had another Above and Beyond nominee that was emailed to her. It was Shannon Boykin. Her placement is the Opera House and she already has 27 hours. Kelly passed out Wishing Well cards. She reminded us to fill out any and all dates we are not available. She will try her best to accommodate all. She asked that we return all cards to her when completed.

Valerie reminded us that the next Board Meeting is Monday, May 13th at her home. The May Dinner is May 20th. She asked us to please pay our May Dinner money, so we are able to give a Gretchen a proper head count. She reminded us to turn in all of our completed cards filled in tonight to Day, Katie, and Kelly.

Adjournment: Valerie adjourned the meeting at 8:09 pm.

*Congratulations to  
President Valerie James and  
Vice President Vicki Singleton  
for graduating from Tuomey Fellows.*



**Mark your calendar...**

*May Dinner  
Monday, May 20th  
The O'Donnell House  
Social Hour ~ 6:15 p.m.  
Dinner ~ 7:00 p.m.*

*Our deepest sympathies are  
extended to Beth Nettles  
on the death of her mother.*

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